

State of Maine
Bureau of Elder & Adult Services
Department of Health & Human Services



Senior Community Service
Employment Program
PY 2005

John Elias Baldacci
Governor

John R. Nicholas
Commissioner
Department of Health & Human Services

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Published by:

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The Senior Community Service Employment Program
State Plan
is available on the Internet.

Point to:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhs/beas>

Table of Contents

SCSEP Introduction.....	1
Section 1. Plan Participation.....	2
Section 2. Involvement of Organizations and Individuals	2
Section 3. Comments	4
Section 4. Plan Provision	4
Section 5. Plan Recommendations	9
Appendix A. Comments	
Appendix B. Equitable Distribution	
Appendix C. SCSEP Prime Sponsors	
Appendix D. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Checklist	

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Introduction:

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a part-time training program for low-income persons age 55 or over. Program participants are placed at local 501 (c)(3) non-profit and government agencies for training and are paid the higher of the Federal or State Minimum Wage. The participant will be expected to try a variety of experiences while preparing to transition into the workforce. The training will include an actual community service activity in addition to classroom offerings, topical work related seminars, CareerCenter related exercises such as classes on resume writing and interviewing skills in addition to computer training. We will provide participants who have not finished high school the opportunity to enroll in GED classes as well as Adult Education and Community College offerings.

Enrollment priority is given to persons over age 60, veterans, and qualified spouses of veterans who have the greatest economic and social needs. One of the major goals of the SCSEP is to increase the individuals self esteem.

SCSEP is authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965; the law was recently amended by the Older Americans Act of 2000. The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment & Training Administration administers SCSEP.

The State of Maine has been allocated 371 training slots for 2004-05. These positions are equally distributed throughout the sixteen counties based on the number of people in the county over age 55 and the number of people that fall within 125 % of the Federal Poverty Level.

Section 1. Plan Participation.

The State of Maine's Bureau of Elder and Adult Services (BEAS), the State Unit on Aging in Maine, has been delegated by Governor John Elias Baldacci to develop the 2005-2006 State Plan for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. On March 28, 2005 BEAS began preparations for developing the State Plan with an email to the Prime Sponsors of SCSEP in Maine. Comments were solicited at that time and discussion occurred at the quarterly Prime Sponsors meeting April 19, 2005. This meeting was held after our regularly scheduled Maine Jobs Council Older Worker Committee meeting at the Augusta CareerCenter. This first meeting was to discuss Equitable Distribution. We agreed that for this State Plan the review and comment of the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to a plan developed by BEAS would meet the requirement of collaboration among the Title V grantees and the State and Local WIBs. The plan will also be posted on the BEAS Website. In addition three Public Hearings were held in Bangor, Augusta and Portland to obtain Public Comments; there were no attendees.

Section 2. Involvement of Organizations and Individuals.

The involvement of the following groups and/or individuals is outlined below:

- a. The BEAS prepared the initial draft State Plan and enlisted comments from Maine's BEAS/SCSEP sub-grantee partners. These partners include the Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, Senior Spectrum (the Central Maine Area Agency on Aging), the Training and Development Corporation, the Cumberland County Training Resource Center and the Waldo Community Action Partners.

- b. Each Title V grantee, The National A.B.L.E. Network, the United States Forest Service and the BEAS/SCSEP had an opportunity for input into the initial draft State Plan at the Public Hearings and through email in May 2005. State and Local Boards under the Workforce Investment Board will be notified that the State Plan is available on the web and that comments are welcome.
- c. Non-profit providers of employment services were provided an opportunity to review and submit comments on the draft plan through the BEAS website. In addition, members of the recently created Older Worker Subcommittee of the Maine Jobs Council were sent emails including the draft and asked to comment.
- d. All Area Agencies on Aging will be notified via email that the draft of the State Plan is available at the BEAS website.
- e. Affected communities were able to access the plan via the BEAS website for the previous year and never offered any comments. The BEAS website is an independent site; in addition it has a link off the State website and receives a substantial amount of activity not only from employers but also from consumers.
- f. Underserved Older Individuals were not sent a draft they were however notified about the State Plan through a hearing notice published in various State newspapers. This hearing notice also included an Informational Session about the SCSEP.
- g. Community-based organizations serving older individuals had access to the Plan through the internet and committee involvement.
- h. Business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce had access through a member serving on the Seasoned Workers Committee from Rockland, Maine.

- i. Labor organizations and safety organizations concerned with workplace safety had access to the State Plan draft from an email sent to a committee member.
- j. Other educational organizations and WIA organizations were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft State Plan through the BEAS website, hearings and email.

Section 3. Public Comments.

The State Plan was reviewed by the organizations discussed in Section 2. In future years, the State Plan will continue to be available at Public Hearings and at the Bureau of Elder & Adult Services website. The Maine SCSEP Prime Sponsors will hopefully consider having informational sessions and/or town meeting opportunities for the public to comment during the coming year. In the past we have had people attend the hearings this year however no one attended. See Appendix A Comments.

Section 4. State Plan Provisions.

a. Basic Distribution of SCSEP Positions.

The Equitable Distribution Report was prepared jointly by SCSEP sponsors in Maine in accordance with Older Worker Bulletin 03-03 and as required by Section 508 of the Older Americans Act. Title V positions in Maine are allocated to three (3) Prime Sponsors covering all sixteen (16) counties. The entire Equitable Distribution Report was submitted on October 1, 2004. Attached to this State Plan is the most recent Equitable Distribution prepared in April 2005. See Appendix B Equitable Distribution.

b. Rural Populations.

Maine is largely a rural State. 58 % of the State is considered rural compared to the US average of 21 % . Nationally Maine has the second largest proportion of its citizens living in rural areas. The "other" Maine is the northern, and western mountain areas and the upper portion of the coastal region. This area has been devastated by the loss of manufacturing jobs in the last five years in addition to an out-migration of many of their young people in search of employment. Traditionally this area has not had a diversified economy, which now has resulted in high unemployment and a substantial amount of poverty. Rural Maine lacks transportation services and the infrastructure to attract industry.

c. Special Populations.

To comply with Section 503(a)(4)(C) of the Older Americans Act, the BEAS uses available statewide data from the U.S. Census Bureau:

- 1) 2000 Census data shows that 65.15% of eligible individuals are below the Federal poverty level. As of 12/30/2000, 85.9% of SCSEP participants in Maine were below the Federal poverty level.
- 2) The 2000 Census shows:

Race of Maine Residents, All Ages	Number	Percent
White only	1,236,014	96%
Black or African-American only	6,760	1%
American Indian or Alaskan Native only	7,098	1%
Asian only	9,111	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander only	382	0%
Some other race only	2,911	0%
Two or more races	12,647	1%
Total Maine Population, all ages	1,274,923	100%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census		

- 3) The projections from the 2000 Census indicate that 49.21% of eligible individuals are disabled; 16.85% have limited English speaking ability; and 55.98% are rural residents. Of those eligible individuals age 55-59, the Census shows only 10.03% are disabled. A rapid rise in disability status occurs for those eligible individuals age 75 or over; the Census shows 58.8% of those 75 or over are disabled.
- 4) As of 3/31/05, 13.5% of Title V participants in the BEAS/SCSEP had a disability. 19.2 % of BEAS/ SCSEP participants were veterans or the surviving spouse of a veteran. All but one of the current BEAS/ SCSEP participants speaks English; several are fluent in French. We have a growing population of Somali refugees that have settled in the Portland, Lewiston and Augusta areas.

d. Type of Skills.

SCSEP participants in Maine possess varied skills. Participants come to the SCSEP with skills in office work, homemaking, driving, cooking, and nursing, to name a few.

Participants are assessed individually to determine what skills, talents, and interests they possess. SCSEP job developers, monitors and other supervisory personnel meet with the participants and discuss how their skills, talents, and interests might translate into employment. An Individual Employability Plan is completed for each participant. Title V sponsors have found many SCSEP participants come into the program lacking computer knowledge and experience. Participants need computer training in order to prepare them for today's job market.

There is a need to look to the future, as our older workers will be needed to take more demanding technological positions. We have used the expression "No Adult Left Behind" when referring to computer skills and advanced training programs. We need to establish a

closer relationship with the CareerCenters and the business community to advance apprenticeship and skill-building opportunities. Hopefully we will see a strong interest in implementing the OJE programs this year.

e. Community Service Needs.

Community service needs are determined by the local non-profit community service agencies acting as host sites for our SCSEP participants. The SCSEP job developers will try to match up a community service assignment with the interest the SCSEP participant has indicated on her/his Individual Employability Plan or during a personal interview or assessment. Recruiting host agencies with more diversified training opportunities will be critical. We must look for opportunities that will give our participants not only training but challenges to prepare them to be successful once they have the opportunity to step into Unsubsidized Employment.

f. Coordination with Workforce Investment Act.

The Project Director of the National A.B.L.E. Network is the co-chair of the Older Worker Committee and attends meetings of the Maine Jobs Council (State WIB). The Older Worker Committee chairperson now reports quarterly at the Maine Jobs Council meetings. All three Prime Sponsor representatives participate quarterly on the Older Workers Committee of the Maine Jobs Council established July 2003. It is a goal of the Prime Sponsors to have a voting seat on the MJC to represent the issues of the population we deal with in Maine.

Each of the four local WIB's have a SCSEP partner serving as a member of the board.

The local WIB's have been developing their five year plans, and SCSEP partners have

been involved in the process. The Prime Sponsors have very few Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the CareerCenters and other WIA partners. The Prime Sponsors anticipate establishing “Blanket” MOU’s with CareerCenters and the Local Workforce Investment Boards by January 31, 2006. See Appendix D. MOU’s

During the last year the Older Worker Committee, in collaboration with the CareerCenters, sponsored five seminars and Career Fairs during National Employ Older Worker Week. They were a huge success and attracted many older people to the CareerCenters.

Recently we have collaborated with the Maine Jobs Council to co-sponsor the SCSEP Public Service Announcement video with the CareerCenters and The Maine Jobs Council. Calls of interest, as a result of airing the PSA, will be filtered through the Career Center hotline at the Bureau of Employment Services and then distributed to the appropriate Prime Sponsor or directly to the CareerCenter.

g. Avoidance of Disruptions

All three of the Prime Sponsors in Maine have an agreement in place that if we need to shift the distribution of participant slots because of a shift in the population we will do so. The Prime Sponsors meet quarterly and we discuss issues that need to be addressed. The Equitable Distribution Report is sent to the U.S. Department of Labor annually. We review our participant numbers with each other and we maintain email and telephone contact regularly. When we have participants that we can’t place in a host agency or that have been on a waiting list; we are sharing names and opportunities.

Section 5. Plan Recommendations.

Recommendation #1 – It is recommended that USDOL urge the State Department(s) of Labor to call all stakeholders together that receive funds related in any way to the job market to meet and see how they can best serve the needs of employers and job seekers. There is a great deal of money that goes to every state in the form of grants and allocations for education and training for many segments of the population both public and private. Someone in each state should know the dollars that come in and for what reason. If we could bring these people together, outside of the local WIB's and the MJC, we may find opportunities that would assist the State in getting more people better trained, better educated and back into the workforce.

Recommendation #2 – It is recommended that USDOL examine the expectations for increased placements while requiring SCSEP grantees to enroll people with the greatest economic and social need. The participants with the greatest need may have the greatest number of barriers to employment. We are finding in Maine that many of the services required by segments of our population have long waiting lists. We need direction on how to deal with issues like this. Case in point: the Vocational Rehabilitation Program has a six (6) to twelve (12) month wait for services. Since we are charged to meet the needs of people that are amongst the most difficult to serve we need our participants seen by these professionals for assessments.

Recommendation #3 – It is recommended that USDOL consider the States that pay a higher than Federal Minimum Wage when determining their Performance Measures.

States paying a higher minimum wage cannot fill all the slots assigned yet their Unsubsidized Placement Rate is based on the participant slots allocated as is the Percent Served.

This was a recommendation made in the 2004-05 State Plan and I am happy to report we were given consideration when the Performance Measures were established this year; we appreciated your listening.

Recommendation #4 – It is recommended that USDOL work closely with other Federal Cabinet level departments to jointly attempt to agree on ways to assist the population in SCSEP and other difficult to serve populations, by creating incentives for people to return to Unsubsidized Employment. Many of our participants want to get off subsidies however there is little incentive for them to do so. If the Departments of Labor, Housing, and Agriculture could combine efforts to extend a "transition period" for people coming off subsidized employment before their new wages are counted against their food stamps, rent subsidy or heating assistance; perhaps a greater number of our participants would try unsubsidized employment. After a twelve to twenty-four month transition period they should have adjusted to the higher income, gone beyond the traditional waiting period for employee benefits, and the new work atmosphere would have taken hold. Currently HUD has addressed this issue with those tenants in training programs with the Earned Income Disregard Program. This same program however has not been extended to those in the Rural Housing Programs. It would appear that this prevents a certain population from shedding the subsidy route for an Unsubsidized Job.

Recommendation #5- It should be a requirement in the WIA Regulations that every State have a SCSEP Prime Sponsor representative appointed to the State Workforce Investment Board to represent the issues facing the population we deal with. The participants with the greatest social and economic challenges need to have a voice and they need to be able to access the services all residents are able to access.

The Older Worker Committee of the Maine Jobs Council is a start but we need to have a voting member on the Jobs Council Board.

On January 31, 2005 a document titled “Protocol for Serving Older Workers” was published. “The goal of this protocol is to enhance the services provided to one of the more underutilized labor pools, older workers, and to infuse the CareerCenter system with innovative strategies for tapping into this labor pool. The protocol outlines a set of action steps that key stakeholders need to embrace to achieve the stated goal of connecting employers to older workers and older workers to jobs.”

Appendix A. Public Comments

Questions and Comments

Question/Comment: Was information from the 2000 Census used in developing this plan?

Response: The 2000 Census Data was used to provide us with pertinent facts on the older workforce.

Question/Comment: Why do you call an informational meeting to inform seniors about SCSEP a Hearing? It would be recommended you call it something else.

Response: In the future we will call the meeting an "Informational Meeting" instead of a "Hearing" unless it has more legal activities associated with it.

Question/Comment: What are Unsubsidized Placement Goals?

Response: Unsubsidized Placement Goals represent one of the Performance Measures established by the U.S. Department of Labor to help determine the effectiveness of the SCSEP. The goal of placing 20 % of our participants in full or part-time employment annually has been the minimum goal for each State program. The other Prime Sponsors or National Grantees traditionally have had higher requirements.

Question/Comment: Can a person who takes an Unsubsidized Job come back into the SCSEP if the job doesn't work out?

Response: A person who takes an Unsubsidized Position that doesn't work out can re-enter SCSEP as long as their income meets the guidelines and if there is a position

available. In addition we can place them on a waiting list or suggest they contact one of the other Prime Sponsors.

Question/Comment: Who are the participants in the SCSEP and how do they qualify?

Response: Traditionally participants are people age 55 and over whose household income falls within 125% of the Federal Poverty Level. In addition many participants receive food stamps, rent subsidy, and heating assistance. Many of the participants are SSI or SSDI recipients. A growing number are looking for our assistance that have been on Unemployment Insurance after losing their jobs because of plant closings or jobs lost to foreign countries. Veterans and spouses of deceased veterans are a priority as are those people over age 60, in addition to those over the age of 55 who have the greatest economic and social challenges to employment.

Question/Comment: What does "SCSEP" stand for?

Response: The acronym, "SCSEP," stands for the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

Question/Comment: The USDOL should consider the local job market when requiring increased unsubsidized placements.

Response: The 20% unsubsidized placement goal is established in the Federal SCSEP Regulations. They do consider the local job market and economic conditions however they must have some minimum production requirements.

Question/Comment: How long can a participant keep their training position?

Response: There is no length of service requirement in the regulations. The goal is to assist participants become job ready; when they are job ready it will be time for them to move to an Unsubsidized Job. The participants are encouraged, from the time they enter the program, to register at the Career Center, review the help wanted section of their local newspapers, search the internet job sites, and sign up with local employment agencies. We are also informing participants at the time of contact, and as often as possible, that SCSEP is a short-term opportunity to prepare for full or part-time employment. Prime Sponsors and sub-grantees have established local criteria for length of stay in the SCSEP.

Question/Comment: What does "rotation" refer to in the SCSEP?

Response: We ask participants to make a list of jobs they might like to do. We try to match up their SCSEP assignment at a host site to one or more of these interests. We tell them, at the time of enrollment, that they will be rotated every four to six months in order to be exposed to different work settings and different technology, in addition to different co-workers. Hopefully as they rotate they will find an employer that will hire them.

Question/comment: Why was it necessary to start a whole new Data Collection System for SCSEP when the U.S. Department of Labor already has an excellent reporting system in place all over the country linking WIA partners?

Response: I did not have a response to this question.

Appendix B. Equitable Distribution

Equitable Distribution Report Search Results For Maine

County: Androscoggin County, ME
Distribution 0.0873
Factor:
Equitable 32

County: Aroostook County, ME
Distribution 0.0991
Factor:
Equitable 37

County: Cumberland County, ME
Distribution 0.1408
Factor:
Equitable 52

County: Franklin County, ME
Distribution 0.0249
Factor:
Equitable 9

County: Hancock County, ME
Distribution 0.0397
Factor:
Equitable 15

County: Kennebec County, ME
Distribution 0.0945
Factor:
Equitable 35

County: Knox County, ME
Distribution 0.0314
Factor:
Equitable 12

County: Lincoln County, ME
Distribution 0.0265
Factor:
Equitable 10

County: Oxford County, ME
Distribution 0.0502
Factor:
Equitable 19

County: Penobscot County, ME
Distribution 0.1166
Factor:
Equitable 43

County: Piscataquis County, ME
Distribution 0.0234
Factor:
Equitable 9

County: Sagadahoc County, ME
Distribution 0.0168
Factor:
Equitable 7

County: Somerset County, ME
Distribution 0.0521
Factor:
Equitable 19

County: Waldo County, ME
Distribution 0.0342
Factor:
Equitable 13

County: Washington County, ME
Distribution 0.0513
Factor:
Equitable 19

County: York County, ME
Distribution 0.1113
Factor: 41

Please fill in the current number of positions for your state and for each national grantee within your state. Totals and differences will calculate automatically. Adjust column widths as needed. (You may remove columns for national grantees that are not represented in your state.) Save the file and return a copy by e-mail to: gibson.gale@dol.gov--5/05

County	Distribution Factor	Equitable Share	State	AARP	ABLE	ANPPM	ES	EW	MS	NAPCA	NCBA	ABLE	NICOA	SER	SSA	USFS	Totals	Diff.
Androscoggin County, ME	0.0873	32	5									27					32	0
Aroostook County, ME	0.0991	37	14									23					37	0
Cumberland County, ME	0.1408	52	16									33					49	-3
Franklin County, ME	0.0249	9	2									9					11	2
Hancock County, ME	0.0397	15	2									13					15	0
Kennebec County, ME	0.0945	35	7									28					35	0
Knox County, ME	0.0314	12	4									8					12	0
Lincoln County, ME	0.0265	10	2									5					7	-3
Oxford County, ME	0.0502	19	1									14				6	21	2
Penobscot County, ME	0.1166	43	4									39					43	0
Piscataquis County, ME	0.0234	9	3									9					12	3
Sagadahoc County, ME	0.0168	6	1									5					6	0
Somerset County, ME	0.0521	19	3									15					18	-1
Waldo County, ME	0.0342	13	8									7					15	2
Washington County, ME	0.0513	19	2									15					17	-2
York County, ME	0.1113	41	2									39					41	0
TOTALS:	1.0000	371	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	289	0	0	0	6	371	0

Appendix C. SCSEP Prime Sponsors

Bureau of Elder and Adult Services

442 Civic Center Drive, 11 State House Station
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State Contact: Mary Walsh & Jim McGrath, SCSEP Co-Directors

207-287-9200, FAX: 207-287-9229

Toll Free 1-800-262-2232 or TTY Toll Free 1-888-720-1925

Email: mary.walsh@maine.gov and james.mcgrath@maine.gov

Counties: Statewide

The National A.B.L.E. Network

647 Main Street
Bangor, ME 04401

Contacts: Dan Muth, Project Director

207-945-6073, 1-800-655-6073, FAX: 207-945-6839

Email: danielmuth@midmaine.com

Counties: Statewide

U S Forest Service

White Mountain National Forest
719 Main Street
Laconia, NH 03246

Contact: Greg Melton, Forest SCSEP Program Coordinator, 603-528-87569 (or 9540)

TTY: 603-536-8722 FAX: 603-528-8783

Email: gkmelton@fs.fed.us

Counties: Oxford

Address chart 5/2/05

Appendix D. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Checklist

Local Area	Grantees in Local Area	Existing MOU Yes/No	If Mou does not exist Timeline for accomplishing MOU	MOU Type Single Blanket	List Grantee and MOU Partners
Oxford County	USDA Forest Service	No	Feb. '06	Blanket	Western LWIB
	National ABLE Network				
	State of Maine				
Waldo,Knox, Lincoln Ctys.	Waldo CAP BEAS/SCSEP	No	Jan. '06	Single	Coastal LWIB
Statewide	NCOA ABLE	Yes	Exists as NCOA	Single	All four LWIBS